

# Neighborhood News

## RIVERGLEN

Fall 2022

Riverglen and River Watch Homeowners' Associations

### Riverglen President's Update Ralph Brown, President

Hello neighbors!

In past editions of the Riverglen newsletter, I have used this space to discuss not only the things happening in our community, but also the Homeowners' Association. This year I have a singular focus, an issue that is bothersome and frustrating. Specifically, the difficulty in finding homeowner association members to volunteer for positions on the board and committees.

This time last year, I wrote the following: "Due to the resignation of one of the previous board members, there is an open position on the Board. We are looking for a volunteer from Unit 4 (Springwood). However, since the position has been open for several months, the board will also consider appointing an at-large member from Unit 1, 2, or 3. Anyone who would like to volunteer should contact the property manager at Greenacre Properties."

A year later, that board position is **STILL VACANT**. Over the last year, the vacancy has been posted on the website and notices have periodically been placed on the sign boards at both entrances. **STILL VACANT**.

The Association cannot run itself. Nearly every day, a question or complaint will be communicated to the property manager or the Board of Directors about something that requires attention, e.g., the landscaping, ponds, park/playground, entrances, walls/fences, deed restrictions, or many other subjects. Fortunately, we do have a dedicated team of individuals who continue to step up and serve the community. But it's a small number of people, and most of them have been volunteering for several years.

For example: EVERY morning, someone opens the gate to the Riverglen neighborhood park by the Boyette entrance. Every evening the gate is locked. Who does that? The volunteer members of the parks committee. This duty rotates among the approximately half dozen members – all homeowners in the community. So, why not just leave the gate open? Simple answer – to preserve the condition of the park. There have been several incidents of vandalism in the park – damage to the gazebo, trash cans, fence, lighting, irrigation controls, and playground equipment. If the park stayed open all night, it is likely that the damage incidents would increase, and more of your dues would be expended on maintenance and repair costs. The parks committee is always in need of more volunteers to share the responsibility of opening and closing the park to preserve our amenities. Please feel free to contact Parks Committee Chairman Rick Huber at [parks@riverglenhoa.com](mailto:parks@riverglenhoa.com) if this is something you can help with.

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### River Watch President's Update Cosmin Achim, President

Greetings River Watch residents! My name is Cosmin Achim, and I am the president of the River Watch Homeowners' Association. My wife and I have been living in this amazing community for the past 5 years and we recently welcomed our first son. I am honored to serve as president and look forward to making this community one of the best to live in.

Currently, the Board of Directors continue to meet virtually via Zoom. All residents are encouraged to attend these meetings which take place on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 pm. Instructions to access the meetings are posted on the website, as well as the message board at the exit of River Watch.

Throughout this past year, the board has been working on several changes within River Watch. The board continues to work on the sidewalk renovation project. This project has proven to be quite costly and never ending. In some areas, the sidewalk panels have been grounded down or replaced. The newly replaced sidewalk panels are being damaged and lifted due to the oak trees in the community. The oak tree roots have caused extensive damage to not only the sidewalks but also the gutter pans causing water to pool in several places on the street. It is a very difficult and costly problem to resolve. If there are sidewalks that you feel require repairs, please call McNeil Management and bring them to their attention.

All of the trees within River Watch have been trimmed to meet Hillsborough County standards.

All deed restrictions, ACC applications, and various other documents are easily accessible on our website, [www.riverwatchhoa.com](http://www.riverwatchhoa.com). Community news, ACC, Board of Director, and HOA meeting dates and times, as well as related Zoom information are also found on the website. You are invited to review the website and offer any suggestions for improvement.

After over 20 years, the entrance and exit gates for the River Watch community have been repainted, the keypad operating system has been updated, and new operator arms have been installed. The latter opens and closes the gate.

There is no overnight parking on the streets of River Watch. The deed restrictions specifically address this issue. River Watch HOA is a gated community, and the streets are private – meaning they are not the responsibility of Hillsborough County. Cars that are left overnight on the streets of River Watch will be towed.

The board is concerned about the safety of all residents and speeding continues to be an issue that needs to be taken seriously. As you travel through River Watch, please remember that the speed limit is 25 mph. We have children, bicyclists, and pedestrians who use the streets in River Watch for play and exercise.

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### Riverglen Management Greenacre Properties

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### Riverglen Board of Directors

#### President

Ralph Brown Unit 7  
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#### Vice President

Wrede Kirkpatrick Unit 1  
VicePresident@riverglenhoa.com

#### Secretary

Larry Barroner Unit 3  
Secretary@riverglenhoa.com

#### Treasurer

Kathy Hofstad Unit 5  
Treasurer@riverglenhoa.com

#### Directors

Cathy James Unit 2  
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Vacant Unit 4

Vacant Unit 5

### Committee Chairpersons

#### ACC

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#### Landscape

Larry Barroner  
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#### Newsletter

Carolyn L. Austin  
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#### Ponds

Trina Dooley  
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#### Parks

Richard Huber  
parks@riverglenhoa.com

#### Website

Ralph Brown  
website@riverglenhoa.com

### Reporting County Problems

http://  
www.hillsboroughcounty.org/  
en/i-want-to/report

## Riverglen President's Update Continued...

Regarding the Board of Directors, the duties may be less intimidating than you think. The board generally meets once a month, for approximately 2 hours, to conduct the business of the Association. Currently, meetings are still conducted virtually via Zoom. So, you don't have to leave your house. We hope to resume in-person meetings soon, but a date has not been decided. I encourage any homeowner, even if you are not interested in a board position, to attend at least one board meeting to see how things work. You just may decide that it's something you can do, which would be great!

What would be even better? More volunteers/candidates than the 7 board positions, and enough attendance or proxies to establish a quorum for the upcoming annual meeting on November 2, 2022. If that happened, we could actually have an election!

We all made the decision to purchase homes in this neighborhood for a variety of reasons, and a significant factor in that decision was the quality of the homes and amenities in Riverglen (and River Watch). It's widely understood that not everyone is necessarily a fan of HOAs. But the very reason for the existence of the HOA is to preserve the quality of the neighborhood, and the investment we made in our homes. We need YOUR help!



As always, I'd like to say thanks to my fellow Riverglen board members who consistently demonstrate sincere concern for the community and the homeowners, while maintaining a cooperative attitude and mutual respect for the other board members. Also, to our committee chairs: Ali Houshmand (ACC), Rick Huber (Parks), Trina Dooley (Ponds), Larry Barroner (Landscape) and Carolyn Austin (editor of this newsletter) – a big thanks for your energy and initiative.



Finally, THANKS and a fond farewell to Margaret Cabral who has served for many years on both boards as the Riverglen secretary and River Watch president. She was also chair of the River Watch ACC. Enjoy your new home and keep in touch! We'll miss you!

*Ralph*



### Prayers of My Mother: ... All you need is faith.

"... a collection of beautiful prayers, meditations, and anecdotes..."

#### Readers' Favorite

"Austin is a born storyteller, as her stories are full of drama and intrigue..." **BookLife Prize**

### Don't Eat Your Vomit!: We All Do This

Written by Carolyn L. Austin, each has earned Readers' Favorite Five-Star Recognition!



## Riverglen HOA Upcoming Events

BOD and ACC meetings are held at 7:00 PM. The meetings are currently held via Zoom. Meeting login information is posted at the community entrances 48 hours prior to the meeting.

### Riverglen BOD

September 27  
October 25 (budget meeting)  
November 22  
December (no meeting)  
January 24 (2023)  
February 28  
March 28  
April 25

### Riverglen ACC

September 13  
October 20  
November 17  
December 22  
January 12 (2023)  
February 23  
March 23  
April 20

**Annual Homeowner  
Meeting  
November 2, 2022, 7 PM,  
Riverview Library**

**Saturday in the Park  
October 22, 2022  
11 AM – 2 PM**

**Saturday  
In  
The  
Park**

**October 22  
11am - 2pm**

## Fences: The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly

The Riverglen ACC

This year, the ACC received an increase in homeowner complaints regarding fences, and fence replacement requests. Evidently, it is appropriate to share some information about fence maintenance and replacement as it relates to our community.

At first glance, the Riverglen Community HOA Guidelines concerning fencing may seem a bit extensive and nitpicky. But as with most guidelines, the goal is to maintain neighborhood standards that improve quality of life and ultimately, property values. The reality is unsightly fencing significantly impacts the look of more than just your property – it can affect the appearance of neighboring properties and even change the look of your entire street. Additionally, a poorly-placed fence or the wrong style of fence can obstruct views – a major problem, particularly for homes that have waterfront views.

### Riverglen Fence Guidelines

Whether you're building a new fence, replacing a fence, or updating an existing fence, there are structural guidelines that you should keep in mind.

First, an ACC request form must be submitted and approved prior to installing a fence or replacing an existing fence. A copy of a physical survey is required for attachment to applications adding new structures or relocating structures. The exact locations of all existing and proposed structures must be indicated on the survey.

#### General Installation Guidelines

The fence must be 6 feet in height **from the ground up**, except for homes with waterfront views as noted below.

The fence must be set back at least 8 feet from the front elevation of the house on both sides.

All supporting posts and beams must face the property of the installer.

Allowable fencing materials and styles are:

- Natural wood – stockade, shadowbox, or board on board.
- PVC/vinyl – privacy or semi-private with or without lattice accent.
- Wrought iron/aluminum – picket

Part wood and part PVC/Vinyl are not permitted (must be the same materials).

**Note:** One side of the house wood and the other side PVC/Vinyl is permitted if desired to match an existing fence on an adjacent lot.

Fence gates must be closed when not in use.

All wood fence stains/painting must be approved by the ACC.

#### Community Wall Requirements

Fences meeting the community block wall must slope down (starting 4 feet away from the wall) to the same height as the block wall.

No wood or PVC/Vinyl or any type of fencing can be installed against the community block wall.

The interior side of concrete block walls must be maintained by the lot owner. Walls must be kept in good condition and free of mildew/discoloration. If painting is required, white or off-white is the only color permitted.

#### Waterfront/Conservation Areas

Waterfront fences must not exceed four (4) feet in height.

Waterfront fences must not obstruct the neighbor's view.

Allowable fencing materials and styles are:

- Picket
- Black or green vinyl coated chain link
- Black aluminum or wrought iron.

Fences on conservation lots cannot extend into the drainage easement or buffer zone.

Corner lots and conservation lots must adhere to any applicable county setbacks for easements.

#### Fence Maintenance

Over time, a number of things can break down even the best fences. Wooden fences in particular are vulnerable to the Florida weather, insects, moisture, and other environmental factors.

The Riverglen ACC Guidelines require that all fences must be maintained in good condition. Broken slats, support poles, or gates must be repaired or replaced when damaged.

Signs that your fence needs repair include mold/mildew, discoloration, warping, or splintering. If you notice these things, you should carefully inspect your fence to determine the cause.

Regular maintenance can help extend the life of your fence and keep it looking good for as long as possible.

#### Fence Replacement

Even with the best care and maintenance, there will come a time when fencing repairs are not enough and replacement is needed.

The following is a list of common indicators for fence replacement:

- Generalized rotting of fence posts and boards
- Generalized leaning across the fence
- Split, warped, and missing boards
- Loose and missing fasteners resulting in a wobbling fence
- Frequent and repeated individual panel or picket repairs (time-consuming and costly)

**Note:** Fencing professionals recommend a good rule of thumb: If you have to replace more than 20% of the fence panels or pickets, it's time to replace the entire fence.

Sources:

<https://www.homestratosphere.com/how-often-do-wooden-fences-need-to-be-replaced/>

<https://www.trustdale.com/blog/should-you-repair-or-replace-your-fence>

<https://www.riverglenhoa.com/wp-content/uploads/RGHOA-ACC-Standards-Jul-2021.pdf>

## Parks Update 2022

Hello Riverglen, The parks are up and running and a popular meeting location for our residents.

The Homeowners' Association maintains the two Riverglen Parks which are both located on Donneymoor Dr. The parks are specifically maintained by the Parks Committee and upkeep is funded with association dues. Improvements and maintenance are ongoing, including repairs, replacements, and updates to existing equipment. Your recommendations and support are always welcome.

The larger park features playground equipment, picnic tables, benches, a gazebo, basketball, tennis and racquetball courts. The smaller park, primarily for children, features playground equipment, picnic tables, and benches. All parks are open to homeowners and their guests.

The committee will present to the Riverglen Board of Directors several projects for consideration for the 2023 budget. They include resurfacing the basketball and tennis courts; painting and repairing the gazebo; and replacing trashcans/liners.

**The committee hosts the annual Saturday in the Park. The next event is scheduled for October 22, 2022, from 11 AM until 2 PM. The menu features hamburgers, hotdogs, and a supply of drinks and chips. We will also provide a bouncy house for the younger kids. Please come and join us.**

The parks are opened at 9 AM and closed at dusk by a few dedicated volunteers. We could really use more volunteers and ask for your support with this responsibility. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, please contact me at [huberrc@verizon.net](mailto:huberrc@verizon.net).

*Rick Huber*

## Wildlife in Riverglen

by Becky Clemments



If you are lucky enough to live in this area, you have possibly seen some amazing animals as well as more common ones. They are out at all times of night and day, particularly near the conservation areas. Just last weekend, our cat alerted us to three young bucks that were in our yard on the side of our home. We watched as they vanished into the woods. A young raccoon has also been hanging out in our yard over the past week.

More regularly we mainly see birds in the area, such as red shouldered hawks, pileated woodpeckers, vultures, owls (we mostly hear), sap suckers, hummingbirds, roseate spoonbills, whistling ducks, an assortment of herons, and the regular little guys – cardinals, sparrows, and wrens. The more majestic sandhill cranes can be seen at any time during the day walking on the roads and in our yards.

You may see some water creatures like alligators, turtles (they nest in our yards), frogs and toads. Snakes can also be seen visiting our yards and ultimately keeping down the pest population.

In the woods next to my house, we have installed a trail camera. As a result, we have the pleasure of seeing things that we normally would have missed with the naked eye. Our camera has caught a view of otter, opossum, raccoons, bobcats, coyotes, armadillo, and families of deer – from fawns to full grown 10-point bucks!

Riverglen is a place rich in wildlife. Take the time to enjoy it!



**WE WANT YOU!**

### Greetings from Secretary Larry Ward, River Watch HOA Board of Directors.

It's that time again! I would like to encourage our community members to join us on the third Wednesday of the month for the Board of Directors' meeting. Joining is EASY! We meet on Zoom, so you don't even have to leave the comfort of your home. These meetings are a time for community members to be made aware of information related to River Watch, including but not limited to: how your dues are spent, issues impacting the community, community events, and suggestions for community improvement. It is also a time for YOUR voice to be heard. As a BOD member, it is important that our actions are reflective of the needs and wants of the community. Without your input it makes this responsibility much more difficult. We not only want but NEED your feedback! Upcoming meeting dates can be found at <https://riverwatchhoa.com/property-management/>, on the right of the page. In addition, meeting notices are posted at the gate entrance the weekend before the meeting. There's even a QR code that can be scanned for your convenience.

I look forward to hearing from and meeting you at the next meeting!

### Please be a responsible dog walker and pet owner!

(Information sourced from Environment 911.org and the Hillsborough County website)

The dirtiest dilemma dog owners face is what to do with their pup's poop. According to the Doody-Free Water Project, which donates pet waste bags to parks nationwide, nearly 23 trillion pounds of poop is generated annually in the US by its 84 million dogs. A staggering percentage is left on the ground!

Pet feces poses a risk not only to environmental health, but also to humans. It carries bacteria and pathogens which can contaminate bodies of water and marine life if not disposed of properly. Unpleasant surprises left on lawns, in conservation areas and parks create a health hazard for the humans that use them.

Contrary to popular belief, rain does not simply wash away pet feces left on the ground. Instead, pet feces are carried into storm drains and drainage ditches. Then swept untreated into lakes, rivers and streams, and other bodies of water. The high nitrogen content depletes oxygen in the water and has devastating effects on fish and other marine wildlife. The easiest and most effective way to curb environmental contamination is to scoop the poop and include it with your household garbage. There are many great biodegradable and compostable pet waste bags on the market made from renewable and plant-based materials like vegetable starches.

In Hillsborough County, along with most other cities, it is against the law to not scoop poop. (Ordinance No 00-26, section 14 and Ordinance 13-33 section 5). Any feces deposited by a dog, an owned cat, or pet pig on public property, public walks, recreation areas or the private property of others must be immediately removed by the person who has custody or control of the animal unless the property owner directs otherwise. Please be a responsible pet owner.

## River Watch HOA Upcoming Events

**October 2, 2022 – Community  
Yard Sale 8am – 1pm**

**January 26, 2023 – River  
Watch Annual Meeting Venue  
TBA**

### River Watch Board of Directors Monthly Meetings:

September 21, 2022 – Budget  
Workshop

October 19, 2022 – Budget  
Adoption

November 16, 2022 – (Note this  
is a Thursday meeting)

December – No meeting

### ACC Meetings:

September 20, 2022  
October 18, 2022  
November 15, 2022  
December – No meeting

## River Watch President's Update Continued from page 1....

Residents are urged to park in their driveways and not block the sidewalk. When the sidewalk is blocked, pedestrians are forced to walk on the street. Walking on the street will not be safe when people continue to disregard the speed limit.



The board would like to acknowledge and thank several members of the River Watch Community for their service. Dawn and Carlos Callao are retired members of the military who faithfully provide care and attention to the American Flag that flies at the entrance of River Watch. Jenn and Rob Defreeze yearly decorate the front entrance for the holidays and do a spectacular job! Becky Clemments, the chairperson of the welcoming committee, visits each new member of River Watch. Kara Rutherford, the yard sale chairperson, donates her time and energy to coordinating yard sales. The board is deeply grateful to all these residents.

The board encourages all residents to participate in the committees and activities within River Watch. We need residents to attend board meetings, ACC meetings, and the annual meetings. You have a voice in what happens within the River Watch Community. Use it!

## River Watch Officers and Chair Persons:

### President

Cosmin Achim  
bod@riverwatchhoa.com

### Vice President

Becky Clemments  
bod@riverwatchhoa.com

### Secretary

Larry Ward  
bod@riverwatchhoa.com

### Treasurer

Kathy Hofstad  
bod@riverwatchhoa.com

### Director at Large

Bill Edis  
bod@riverwatchhoa.com

### ACC Chairperson

Bill Edis

### Welcome Chairperson

Becky Clemments

### Landscape Chairperson

Open

### Yard Sale Chairperson:

Kara Rutherford

### River Watch Property Management:

McNeil Management  
Services Inc.

Jennifer Conti- Property  
Manager

Jennifer@mcneil.com

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Brandon, Florida

33508-6004

813-571-7100

## From the Treasurer's Desk...

Greetings! As the treasurer for both the Riverglen and the River Watch HOAs this year, I wanted to provide a brief update. Our all-volunteer HOA board members and the various committees do an excellent job in their fiduciary responsibilities, always keeping compliance – as well as the best interest of the associations and residents, in mind.

**Riverglen HOA.** The HOA fees have been flat for several years now. We continue to operate within budget parameters and currently have adequate reserves. This year, we have seen inflationary impacts from some of our vendors. In a typical year, some of our larger, non-recurring expenditures include maintenance and repair for the park, the irrigation systems, and tree removals. This year, we have also incurred some unexpected repair and replacement costs because of vandalism in the parks.

**River Watch HOA.** The HOA fees have been fairly flat for several years now. This year, we continue to operate within budget parameters despite inflationary impacts from some vendors. In recent years, the association has spent a sizable amount of funds on sidewalk maintenance, considerably more than what was anticipated (based on the reserve study prepared just a few years ago). As a result, this spring we hired a local firm to prepare an updated reserve study. While we have a beautiful tree canopy around our neighborhood, it is unfortunate that tree roots contribute to the lifting of some sidewalk panels. Over the next several years, we expect that we will continue to have increased spending of reserve funds for sidewalk maintenance and street drainage improvements in a few areas. We do not anticipate having to re-asphalt our roads for several more years. It is our intent to balance the reserve spending to accommodate appropriate infrastructure maintenance while keeping our association fees as reasonable as possible.

As a reminder, please pay your association dues on time.

- Riverglen residents: the association fees are due quarterly (Jan 1, Apr 1, July 1, Oct 1).
- River Watch residents: in addition to the quarterly Riverglen fees listed above, the River Watch association fees are due semi-annually (Jan 1, Jul 1).

Best Regards,  
Kathy



## Helpful information from the River Watch Architectural Control Committee (ACC)

Thus far, the ACC has reviewed more than 20 applications. That's great news because it means that our residents are keeping their properties in the best possible condition. Remember, any alteration you make to your property requires an ACC application and approval.

The process is very simple. Residents simply go to [www.riverwatchhoa.com](http://www.riverwatchhoa.com) to find the ACC application. The completed application along with required documentation should be emailed to [management@mcneilmsi.com](mailto:management@mcneilmsi.com). What kind of documentation? For example, if you are painting your home, there is a required color palette for River Watch and only those colors are permitted. Once the colors are chosen, you will need to send paint color swatches, and a photo of your home identifying the body, trim, and door colors. The ACC will not review an incomplete application and it will be returned to you for completion.

It is not advisable to start a home project without ACC approval. The project could be denied, and the homeowner would be responsible to return the home to its original condition at the homeowner's expense. ACC requests should be submitted to McNeil Management the Friday before the ACC meeting. If you are unsure regarding any part of this process, or whether you need to file an ACC application for your project, feel free to email (address above) or call McNeil Management at (813) 571-7100.

The approval process begins with each ACC member reviewing the submitted applications prior to the ACC meeting. During the meeting, the committee discusses each application and either recommends approval or disapproval. The ACC chairperson presents all applications at the River Watch Board of Directors' meeting, usually the following evening. The Board of Directors either approve or disapprove the committee's recommendation.

If you are a new resident to River Watch, welcome! Please take some time to familiarize yourself with the deed restrictions. If you have any questions for the committee, the ACC meetings are held via Zoom on the third Tuesday of each month. So, you don't even have to leave the comfort of your home. If you don't have computer access, you can use your cell phone or tablet. All residents are encouraged to attend. We also invite residents to consider becoming a member of the River Watch ACC. There are no special requirements.

## Landscape Update

by Larry Barroner

By the time this newsletter makes it to your front door, our live oak trees along Donneymoor Drive should have been trimmed and looking pretty good. An arborist from Brightview Landscape Maintenance did a health check on all the trees and made the suggestion to do some preventative end-weight pruning of the limbs. As you may have noticed, after rain, the branches seem to hang low. You can really see it if you are following a box truck and it seems like it is hitting every limb or swerving to avoid them. This maintenance helps lift the canopies and prevents damage to not only the trees, but also the box trucks.

Our unwelcomed guest – the Southern Sculpted Pine Borer, is still hanging around damaging our pine trees. It has slowed over the past year and only a few pine trees had to be removed. If additional trees become infested (turn brown and limbs die and fall), our landscape team will make the recommendation to have it removed before anyone gets hurt or property is damaged.

The community landscape is dependent on our irrigation system that is connected to two wells and keeps common areas looking green. If you ever notice leaks (e.g., unexplained running water on a dry day in the gutter of Donneymoor Drive), other issues with the irrigation system (e.g., broken sprinkler heads or spraying on the street) or issues with the landscape or the landscape crew, please contact our property manager, Angela Parker at Green Acres Properties, [aparker@greenacre.com](mailto:aparker@greenacre.com).

As always, I welcome any suggestions you may have to enhance our community. You may contact me at [landscape@riverglenhoa.com](mailto:landscape@riverglenhoa.com).

### Planting?

While performing searches on topics for our annual newsletter, I stumbled on a convenient site that I bookmarked for my own reference and wanted to share. The site is: <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/EP450>. This site provides information regarding the best month to plant different annuals, bulbs, herbs and vegetables in Florida as well as what to do if you notice any issues with these plants. I know our "green thumb" individuals probably already know this information, but the site is for the rest of us!

### Home Improvement?

Planning on doing some home improvements? That's fantastic! Just remember that any change to the exterior of your home requires prior approval from the ACC (Architectural Control Committee). This includes (but is not limited to) re-roofing, painting, adding a pool, planting new trees or landscaping, installing a storage shed, and anything else that affects the exterior of your home. These forms can be found on your community website at <https://www.riverglenhoa.com/committees/acc/acc-request-form/>. Please understand that unapproved modifications are a violation of your deed restrictions and can lead to additional expenses, including undoing the changes. So please get preapproval!

Next time you're tempted to leave your dog's droppings on the lawn, remember these facts:

- It's common courtesy. Cleaning up after your dogs shows respect for others in our community.
- Dog Poop is unhealthy.
- Dog Poop biodegrades slowly.
- Dog Poop pollutes the water.

Your actions set an example for others. When you pick up after your dog, you are part of the solution, rather than the problem. Your actions will also help foster the right thing to do.

### Did you know?

YOU can take action on getting something done, from potholes, to lifted sidewalks, or just reporting an incident to the County Sheriff.

Go to our website, <http://www.riverglenhoa.com/> and click on the "Reporting County Problems" link. The link will direct you to <http://www.hillsboroughcounty.org/en/i-want-to/report> where you can submit an online work repair with the Public Works Department and identify the pothole or sidewalk issue.

If you see something, say something! Animal complaints, missing property, package theft/porch pirate/vandalism, and several other issues can be reported online at:

<https://teamhcs.com/Section/c5c8008b-323e-4a01-bb50-fb170a8c305e/File-a-Police-Report>.

For emergencies call 911. For non-emergencies, call (813) 247-8200.

If we all do our part, we can ensure our community stays as nice as we all want it to be.

**You can make an impact on our community by joining the HOA Board. We currently have openings. If you are interested, please attend one of our monthly meetings to discuss if you have what we need!**

## Florida Friendly Landscaping (Information from the UF – IFAS Extension Office)

We often hear the term “Florida Friendly Landscaping,” but what is it? It is an integrated approach to maintaining an attractive, colorful, and diverse yard which is friendly to wildlife and generally requires less work than the traditional landscape. The Florida statute 373.185 describes it as “quality landscapes that conserve water, protect the environment, are adaptable to local conditions, and are drought tolerant.”

There are nine principles of Florida Friendly Landscaping.

1. **Right plant, right place.**
2. **Water efficiently.**
3. **Fertilize appropriately.**
4. **Mulch.**
5. **Attract wildlife.**
6. **Manage yard pests.**
7. **Recycle.**
8. **Reduce stormwater runoff.**
9. **Protect the waterfront.**

This article discusses the first six principles.



**Right plant, right place.** Plants selected for a specific site will require minimal amounts of water, fertilizer, pesticides, and maintenance. The right plant (native or non-native) planted in the wrong place can still be problematic. When selecting plants, consider:

- plant hardiness zone,
- soil type and pH,
- light (full sun, partial sun/shade, full shade),
- wet-dry,
- well-drained/poorly drained,
- mature size (height, spread, growth rate) of plant,
- views from outside and inside of house,
- hardscape (walkways, driveways, pool, or fence),
- and structural limitations and obstructions (utility lines, orientation of house).

**Water efficiently.** One of Florida’s greatest natural resources is its water. Approximately 60% of Florida’s fresh water is used on landscape irrigation. Misuse of fertilizers and pesticides are big contributors to water pollution. Most storm drains lead directly to stormwater ponds or a natural waterway. Irrigation efficiency is important. Early morning is the best time to irrigate. Avoid watering between 10am – 4pm, as 40-60% of the water applied evaporates in the afternoon sun. Overwatering of your lawn encourages the growth of fungi and bacteria as well as weed growth. It also promotes a shallow root system

**Fertilize appropriately.** Plants require nutrients for growth and to maintain health. Soil, rain, and air provide necessary nutrients. Lawn and landscape plants may require fertilization in harsh urban conditions. Many counties, including Hillsborough County, have ordinances limiting fertilizer applications during certain months. Never fertilize before a heavy rain or within 10 feet of any water body. Over fertilizing can stimulate excessive growth, aggravate pest problems, require frequent watering, and result in runoff into the nearest body of water.

**Mulch.** Avoid volcano mulching. Keep thick mulch at least 10” from tree trunks. Maintain a 2-3” layer of mulch in landscape beds. Leave space between the mulch and the plant’s trunk or stem.

**Attract wildlife.** Urban areas are rapidly increasing worldwide, resulting in loss of habitat. Decisions made by homeowners can impact the environment positively or negatively. Native pollinators and honeybees are in decline around the world (habitat loss and colony collapse disorder). It is estimated that about 90% of monarch populations in North America have vanished due to habitat loss. Monarchs lay eggs on milkweed; milkweed is the only host plant for them. Bat and bird populations are declining as well, with the losses estimated at 3 billion throughout US and Canada.

It is easy to create a habitat to help wildlife:

- limit the amount of lawn,
- plant a variety of flowering and fruiting plants,
- use plants of varying height to create layers for shelter,
- and diversify areas to attract a wider variety of animals.

Habitats include food, water, shelter/cover, and space. To attract pollinators (butterflies, bees, hummingbirds, etc.):

- include three or more flowering plant species that bloom each season,
- ensure that you plant both nectar and host plants for butterflies,
- provide places for bees to nest,
- and avoid pesticides when possible (do not use any pesticides on milkweed and other host plants as it will kill the caterpillars).

Consider the use of native vegetation – there are about 2800 native Florida plant species! Native plants provide reliable sources of food and nectar. Try to avoid invasive exotic plants.

Bloom shape and color matter. Small bees, and some butterflies, wasps, and moths prefer open-faced flowers. Large bees, hummingbirds, some butterflies and moths prefer tubular shaped flowers. Bees are most attracted to white, yellow, blue and purple blooms. Butterflies prefer red and purple flowers. Hummingbirds are often attracted to red blooms as well.

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## Florida Friendly Landscaping Continued from page 7..

Some Florida Friendly Landscape plants include holly, beautyberry, Chickasaw plum, Walter's viburnum, dwarf palmetto, golden dew drop, firebush, and coral honeysuckle. Two popular options for butterfly host plants include native milkweeds (attracts monarch and queen butterflies) and passionflower (attracts gulf fritillary, zebra longwing, and variegated fritillary butterflies). A few examples of excellent pollinator friendly nectar producing plants/trees include bottlebrush tree, chaste tree, salvias, pentas, sunshine mimosa, twin flower, coreopsis, blanket flower, horsemint, beach sunflower, porter weed, and lantana.

Manage yard pests. Reduce pesticide use. Studies have shown that homeowners apply between 4-10 times more pesticides per acre than farmers. Insects are the support beam of the food pyramid. Approximately 40% of insect populations world-wide are in decline. If you must use pesticides, use the least toxic methods possible and spot treat only. Some least toxic alternatives to pesticides can include horticultural oils, insecticidal soaps, biorationals, strong streams of water, and some good old-fashioned stomping! When you have beneficial insects in your environment, you can often avoid using harmful, broad spectrum or systemic pesticides.

Here is a list of websites to find additional resources to help create a Florida Friendly Landscape.

### Florida-Friendly Landscaping

<https://ffl.ifas.ufl.edu/>

### Gardening Solutions

<https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/>

### Florida Wildflower Foundation

<https://flawildflowers.org/>

### Florida Association of Native Nurseries

<https://www.fann.org/>

### Florida Wildflowers Growers Cooperative

<http://www.floridawildflowers.com/>

### Audubon Florida

<https://fl.audubon.org/>

### UF Wildlife Ecology and Conservation Extension

<https://wec.ifas.ufl.edu/extension/>

### Florida Plant Atlas

<https://florida.plantatlas.usf.edu/>

### Southwest Florida Water Management District

<https://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/>

### Florida Nursery Growers and Landscape Association

<https://www.fngla.org/professional-development/certifications/fngla-certified-horticulture-professional>

## Florida Friendly Landscape



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